

## THE RUINS OF PALMYRA.

Sweetly the setting sun sank in the glowing west,  
 While far o'er Syria's distant heights its parting splendors rest;  
 Amidst the deep blue sky the silver moon rose bright,  
 And o'er Euphrates winding stream pours forth her radiant light.  
 The air of night was soft, and fresh the evening breeze,  
 Which cooled Palmyra's burning sands and stirred the lofty trees;  
 The weary camels come, glad at the herdsman's call,  
 And o'er the gray and dreary plain the lengthening shadows fall.  
 Deep silence reigns around, save when the night bird's cry  
 Is heard across the desert waste or echoes through the sky;  
 In the dim twilight's light the stately columns gleam,  
 Like phantoms on the dusky air their giant forms are scen.  
 My mind was filled with awe amid this solemn scene,  
 The lone, still night, the deepening gloom lit by the pale moon beam,  
 The memory of past days thrilled deeply through my heart,  
 And on a broken column's trunk I sat and mused apart.  
 Here, 'mid these ruins drear, amid this desert waste,  
 A mighty city reared its front, the proud abode of taste;  
 These massive marble piles in regal splendor shone,  
 Those fallen pillars raised their heads o'er fanes of living stone.  
 Here throngs of busy life on these paved pathways trod,  
 Here princely offerings were poured forth before the heathen's God;  
 Here Tyrian purple shone, and Syria's silken thread,  
 Here the gay tissue of cashmere with Persia's carpet spread.  
 From Baltic's stormy shore rich amber here was laid,  
 And glittering gold from Ophir's mines in shining heaps displayed;  
 Arabia's precious pearls and perfumes rich and rare,  
 In rich profusion graced those walls and filled the fragrant air.  
 What now remains of all this power at once so vast and grand?  
 A mournful skeleton alone of this once mighty land,  
 The silence of the tomb broods o'er these marble halls,  
 And loathsome reptiles leave their slime amid the sculptured walls;  
 So perish all the works which feeble man essays,  
 Thus vanishes the boasted power which vanity displays.